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use one type of currency rather than another. For example, a petty trader often buys a package of European cigarettes for 20 francs C.F.A. in the Wagadougou market for retail in the local markets. Here he sells some individual cigarettes at the price of two for 5 francs C.F.A., some at two for 3 old-fashioned francs (making a total of about 21 francs C.F.A.). The vendors are fully aware of this profit differential, but make no attempt to insist on one currency over the other. Furthermore, they appeared indifferent when I suggested that I planned to take advantage of the price differential which I suspected in the two systems. It appears that they believe it would be a waste of time to try to obtain the profit differential.

Barter as a form of exchange had just about disappeared from the larger markets in Mossi country, but it exists alongside the use of currency in the local markets, especially in connection with foodstuffs and other vegetable commodities. People tend to resort to barter when they wish to exchange a specific product for another. Thus, a woman who normally sells rice for currency sometimes will suddenly refuse to accept money and insist on exchanging the rice for cotton or peanuts. The bartering then takes the form of a half-calabash of rice for a half-calabash of either peanuts or cotton, depending upon which products are desired. This equivalence seems always to be maintained regardless of the currency value of rice, cotton, or peanuts at the market on the day in question. For example, a woman who was looking for persons with whom she could exchange peanuts for rice and she refused to sell peanuts to me. I asked why she would not sell the peanuts and then take the money and buy rice with it. She said that if she did so, she would suffer a dual loss: first, in selling the peanuts, each valued at 100 cowries (one-half franc of unofficial currency) for 5 francs. I counted the nuts, which amounted to about 120, and then asked for the customary *lenga* (bonus) and received 36 more peanuts worth 1.5 franc. On the next market day I observed that peanuts were not being sold but only bartered for cotton which was being sold. I decided to test the system. I bought 2 old-fashioned francs' worth of cotton at 100 cowries a ball, and took them over to the woman bartering peanuts for cotton. She accepted the balls of cotton, measured them in a calabash, and then gave me the same volume of peanuts in exchange. I counted the nuts and discovered that I had received some 200 nuts for only 2 francs. When I discussed this experiment with some of the people, they admitted knowing about this practice and said that they did this at times. I then suggested that it would be possible to manipulate the system to one's advantage, but was again greeted with a show of indifference by most of my auditors. One man eventually said that I would lose because prices changed.

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443 554 776 782 due to the bickering, quarreling and even fighting they have to prevent by cooling the tempers of the market people—that they become quite angry. When the spirits are not satisfied, they fail in their tasks and real trouble breaks out in the market, disrupting the trading; and if they are not pacified they may even cause the death of the market officials.[12]

In the days before the market officials were banned, these sacrifices were performed regularly. At that time the Raga Naba simply asked the Kos Naba to seize the appropriate animal in the market to perform [648] the rite. The problem today is that since the French have abolished the office of Raga Naba, and in some districts have prevented the chief from even naming one secretly, the markets in the latter local- [208] ities are considered "dangerous markets." Once a market acquires such a reputation, people do not like to visit it because they fear that they would get into fights or quarrels. Not only this, but it is believed that if a market has been without a Raga Naba for a long time, the *tengkouga* there become so angry for being neglected that they kill [123] the first chief appointed to it. This was the reality or belief behind a series of misadventures of which I was the victim.

123 443 554 656 I had spent an entire day in a market, and on returning home could not find my pen. The next morning I sent an assistant to the chief telling him about the loss and asking him to have an announcement made in the market on the next market day that I would pay a handsome reward to whomever should find and deliver the pen. The chief sent back a reply saying that since there was no Raga Naba, he would have the Kos Naba acquaint the people with my loss. On the day of the market, I waited until midday, when most of the people had arrived, and then went to see whether the Kos Naba had any news of the pen. I checked with several of my friends to see whether they had heard about the pen and discovered, to my chagrin, that no an- [567] nouncement had been made about it. I went and told the Kos Naba that the people were not hearing about the pen and suggested that one way to do so would be to have the Binderes (drummers and griots) circulate through the market announcing the loss. The Kos Naba refused to do this, and when I enlisted the aid of the chief's secretary, he, too, said that it could not be done because there was no Raga Naba. I had some notes on the institution of the Raga Naba, but as I did not know everything about it, I was, therefore, frankly puzzled

(12) Zahan (1954 : 371) states that "the place where all kinds of merchandise accumulate and where strangers come is a place charged with forces. In time, these forces build up to such a point within the precincts of the market that some purifications are necessary to liberate them. To omit making them would expose the participants to excitements leading to brawls and compromising the place of the transactions."

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and a bit peeved at not being able to put my idea into practice. I next sought the advice and consolation of an elder noble who listened quite calmly and then said: "The customs of these kafirs (heathens) are foolish." Being a Moslem, my friend was very often critical of the pagans, and could be relied upon to explain why their customs were "foolish." He said that in former days the Raga Naba would have climbed a tree and announced to the crowd any message from the district chief. Moreover, he was the custodian of all lost articles and restored them to their owners. The Moslem said that my request could not be granted because there was no Raga Naba, and that probably there would never be another. When the French first banned the institution, the local chief dismissed the Raga Naba. With the passage of years, however, the market became so dangerous that the chief tried to appoint another ex-serf to the job. This man soon died, and his successor died shortly after being appointed. Since that time the chief has made no attempt to name a new market chief.

With this new knowledge I called my aide and inquired from him whether this information was true and if so, why did he not tell me the true state of affairs. His reply was that he did not wish to say that the market was bad because the local people believed that they had solved the problem of the lack of a Raga Naba. When the last Raga Naba died, the chief decided not to name a new one, but in order to placate the market *tengkouga*, he ordered his *tengsoba* to make sacrifices to it. It was believed that these sacrifices would be acceptable as long as the officiant did not bear the title of Raga Naba. The other functions of the Raga Naba, such as collecting goods for the chief and preserving peace in the market, were taken over by the Kos Naba and another servant of the chief. However, the Kos Naba had to be careful lest he overstep his authority in such a way as would acquaint the *tengkouga* with the real situation. In my case, the chief was acting by trying to get the Kos Naba to acquaint the people with my loss in as inconspicuous a manner as possible. The consensus was that the Kos Naba would have risked his life had he made any kind of announcement to the market people, because the *tengkouga* would have thought that he was the new Raga Naba, and if not contented with the people would have killed him. Under these circumstances, I withdrew my request. I discovered later that my pen was not lost but had been in the hut all the time.

Those chiefs who have succeeded in retaining their market officials even secretly have been able to maintain their control over public behavior there. The Mossi are fairly law-abiding despite the persistence among them of a warrior tradition. Every man who goes to market, or anywhere for that matter, usually carries a baton over his